efforts for management of natural disasters in the country including relief, rehabilitation, preparedness and mitigation. There is no proposal, at present, for creating a separate Department of Diastcr Management.

Policy/Programme to help fishermen

2862. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated and policy or programme to help fishermen of the country in general and Tamil Nadu in particular to improve their fishing business and in buying modern fishing equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether fishermen in the coastal areas arc often fall prey to the neighbouring country's illdesigns;

(e) whether recently a few fishermen and their boats were captured by Sri Lankan Army; and

(f) how would Government stop such incidents recurring in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following schemes are under implementation for helping fishermen in the country including the fishermen in Tamil Nadu for buying modern fishing equipments to improve their fishing business:

(i) Centrally . Sponsored Scheme 'Development of Marine Fisheries' through motorisation of traditional craft in which a subsidy of Rs. 12,000/- for Inboard Motor, Rs. 10,000/- for Outboard Motor and Rs. 6,000/- for gear unit is provided;

(ii) Centrally Sponsored Scheme for construction of fishing harbours and landing centres in which Central/States Grant-in-Aid is provided for setting up of infrastructure facilities like landing platforms, auction halts, provision of freshwater, cold storage etc.; and

(iii) Assistance for procurement of FRP craft, VHF sets, echo* sounder etc. under State plan schemes like in Tamil Nadu, Orissa, etc.

(c) Question does not arise.

(d) to (f) The fishermen mainly from Tamil Nadu often cross International Border Line on some occasions unknowingly or inadvertantly due to engine trouble, strong current etc. About 18 incidents of capturing of Indian fishermen and their boats by Sri Lankan Army have been reported since 2000. Mutual discussions at higher diplomatic level between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka are held as and when such incident occur to get the Indian fishermen and their boats released by the Sri Lankan Government at the earliest. Besides, the Government of Tamil Nadu has also initiated a scheme to look after the families of captured fishermen, providing them Rs. *50/-* per day per family till the fishermen return to their homes.

Salinity in Kutch area

2863. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO:
SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether increasing salinity has spelt doom for thousands of fanners living in Kutch area on account of farm land becoming barren; and

(b) if so, the assistance proposed to the poverty stricken farmers of the area who are migrating to towns in search of work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Large number of farmers living in Kutch area have been affected by increasing salinity. The problem of salinity ingress in coastal areas of Kutch was examined by a High Level Committee constituted by the State Government under the Chairmanship of Shri K. Shivaraj, the then Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat in 1978 and the committee recommended ingress control work worth Rs. 186 crores.